



News Release

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For Immediate Release

Caltrans makes Safety improvements to I-80 Truck Detour

Colfax – In response to concerns from Nevada and Placer County residents about safety, emergency response and noise, the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) has made several significant changes to nightly detours of Interstate 80 truck traffic on State Highways 20 and 49 through Nevada City and Grass Valley.

Thanks to the input of citizens in both communities, beginning last Thursday night, May 7, Caltrans extended the piloted escorts of westbound truck traffic on State Highway 20 from the 20/49 junction near Uren Street to McKnight Way in Grass Valley. Caltrans also agreed to fund an additional California Highway Patrol (CHP) unit to patrol Highway 49 during all nighttime detours between Wolf/Combie Road and Nevada City. This extended convoy will be done at reduced speeds, which should aid residents concerns about safety and noise generated from truck engines, and engine brakes.

In response to concerns about emergency response, Caltrans has made direct contact with local fire and emergency providers to improve accident, fire and emergency response times during the detour. A skilled Caltrans Equipment Operator has also been assigned to patrol the detour route and operate heavy equipment strategically placed on the detour route. This was done to improve response time for any incident requiring heavy equipment. To date, more than 10,000 trucks have traveled this detour without incident and more than 115 trucks have pulled off the road after failing nightly safety inspections. One driver was also arrested by the CHP on April 20 for suspicion of driving under the influence.

At the request of Nevada City and Grass Valley residents, Caltrans engineers, working closely with the CHP, also re-evaluated I-80 crossover alternatives to eliminate the nightly detours. After a careful review, they determined that the safest option was to continue the nightly detours. The crossover alternatives would present a significant threat of head-on collisions on I-80. CHP Gold Run Commander John Arrabit was also opposed to the crossover alternatives due to the increased risk to motorists on the Interstate. The detour is expected to last until November.



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"The safety of the motoring public remains our chief concern," said District Director Jody Jones. "We appreciated the input we received from local residents during a public workshop held April 28 in Nevada City and we remain committed to make any improvements we can to alleviate concerns and improve safety," she added.

The nightly detours are necessary to facilitate work on the \$70 million dollar Gold Run III construction project to repair Interstate 80 between Magra and Colfax. Work includes overlaying the mainline with new asphalt concrete, replacing the median barrier, upgrading the drainage system and improvements to bridges throughout the project boundaries.

To assist motorists traveling over the Sierra Nevada Mountains on I-80, Caltrans developed the GetAcross80.com public awareness campaign. Citizens are encouraged to call 1-877-362-8080 for recorded information or log onto www.getacross80.com for travel information, project descriptions, sign up for email alerts, view live traffic camera and read the latest news on the Sierra Repair Projects.

Caltrans urges all motorists to use caution in this area and to "Slow for the Cone Zone".

**SLOW FOR THE
CONE ZONE**
C A L T R A N S

